

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 20

August 5, 2013

**SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC 911 ABUSE PROCEDURE - ESTABLISHED**

**PURPOSE:** This Order establishes Section 4/271.21, *Electronic 911 Abuse Procedure*, of the Department Manual and revises the responsibilities of various sections within Major Crimes Division (MCD) to add procedures relating to electronic 911 abuse incidents.

**BACKGROUND:** Recently there have been several incidents of 911 abuse involving the false reporting of crimes at homes owned by various celebrities in Los Angeles that resulted in the response of law enforcement personnel. This recent rash of activity is related to a nationwide phenomenon termed "Swatting."

**PROCEDURE:**

- I. ELECTRONIC 911 ABUSE PROCEDURE - ESTABLISHED.** Department Manual Section 4/271.21, *Electronic 911 Abuse Procedure*, has been established.

**Electronic 911 Abuse - Defined.** Electronic 911 Abuse is a direct and intentional act, or attempted act, of falsely reporting a fictitious crime or incident by means of telephone, cellular phone, and or internet technology that conceal the identifiers and location of the reporting party/perpetrator. The information is transmitted with the intent to deceive emergency services (e.g., 911 operator) into directing police/fire units to an address where an emergency is not occurring or has not occurred. The sole intention of the call is to:

1. Attract considerable community/media attention;
2. Involve a public/celebrity figure or a critical infrastructure or key resource (CIKR); and/or,
3. Provide notoriety to individuals or groups operating within electronic or digital domains for the purposes of status or fame.

The perpetrators of electronic 911 abuse incidents are motivated by the media recognition the incident(s) creates. **To reduce or eliminate the perpetrator's motivation, the Department will not release the nature of any electronic 911 abuse-related call to the public/media, nor the location or the name of the resident.**

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**A. Officer's Responsibilities.** The primary officer(s) assigned to an electronic 911 abuse incident must:

- \* Notify the Criminal Intelligence Section (CIS), Major Crimes Division (MCD), of the incident as soon as practicable to determine if the incident qualifies as an electronic 911 abuse incident;
- \* If CIS **does not** identify the incident as an electronic 911 abuse incident, complete an Investigative Report (IR), Form 03.01.00, titled "911 Abuse," and the investigation will remain with the geographic Area;
- \* If CIS identifies the incident as an electronic 911 abuse incident, complete an IR titled "Electronic 911 Abuse," place "MCD" in the "INVEST DIV" box, check the "CTSOB MAJOR CRIMES" box, and place the name and serial number of the CIS employee that was notified on the IR face-sheet and on the report narrative; and,

**Note:** During off-hours, CIS can be reached via the Real-Time Analysis and Critical Response (RACR) Division.

- \* Notify RACR Division.

**B. Major Crimes Division's Responsibilities.** Criminal Investigation Section, MCD, including on-call CIS personnel are responsible for investigating and arresting individuals involved in electronic 911 abuse incidents.

**Note:** The Commanding Officer, MCD, has the final authority for determining which cases will be assigned to CIS.

**C. Area Records Unit's Responsibilities.** Area records unit must enter the Modus Operandi Codes 0392 [Electronic 911 Abuse (Swatting)] when processing an "Electronic 911 Abuse" IR. Area records unit will forward a copy of the IR to MCD. Furthermore, Area records units will continue to use the crime classification of "Miscellaneous Crime" for electronic 911 Abuse IRs.

**D. Communications Division's Responsibilities.** Communications Division operators who receive incoming **non-medical** related calls for emergency services from Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) call centers will attempt to obtain the Internet Protocol (IP) address of the caller from the TRS operator and also determine if the caller utilized an instant messaging service, and

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include that information In the incident history of the call. Furthermore, Communications Division will dispatch the call in the same manner as a "bomb call" via the Mobile Digital Computer. A Patrol unit will be assigned Code Three and a supervisor Code Two.

- II. MISCELLANEOUS RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN MAJOR CRIMES DIVISION - REVISED.** Major Crimes Division - Functions; Major Crimes, Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Section; Surveillance Support Section; and, Major Crimes - Criminal Investigation Section responsibilities within the Organization and Functions of the Los Angeles Police Department have been revised to include procedures involving electronic 911 abuse incidents. Attached are the revised sections with revisions indicated in italics.

**AMENDMENTS:** This Order adds Section 4/271.21 to the Department Manual. The link applicable to the revised Major Crimes Division - Functions; Major Crimes, Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Section; Surveillance Support Section; and, Major Crimes - Criminal Investigation Section within the Organization and Functions of the Los Angeles Police Department are accessible on the Department's Local Area Network.

**AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY:** The Commanding Officer, Internal Audits and Inspections Division, will review this directive and determine whether an audit or inspection will be conducted in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.



CHARLIE BECK  
Chief of Police

Attachment

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**Organization and Functions of the Los Angeles Police Department**  
**Revised by Special Order No. 20, 2013**

**COUNTER TERRORISM AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS BUREAU, MAJOR CRIMES DIVISION.**

**MAJOR CRIMES DIVISION – FUNCTIONS.** Major Crimes Division (MCD) is responsible for:

- Collecting and analyzing information *related to* individuals and groups who may be planning, threatening, financing, aiding/abetting, attempting or performing unlawful acts, the results of which are intended to further their societal objectives, to influence societal action, or to harass on the basis of race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation;

**Note:** Threat Management Unit, Detective Support and Vice Division (DSVD), is responsible for the investigation of threatening letters directed toward the Mayor, public officials and City entities. The Area detective division is responsible for the investigation of other threatening letter incidents. A copy of these types of correspondence are to be forwarded to the Commanding Officer, DSVD.

- Investigating all bombings, attempt bombings, bomb threats, facsimile devices, explosive devices, nuclear, chemical or biological material when used in the commission of a crime, or as it relates to terrorism;
- Assisting Areas/divisions with major crime investigations, when appropriate;

**Note:** The Commanding Officer, Counter Terrorism and Special Operations Bureau (CTSOB), will coordinate and liaise with the Commanding Officer, Detective Bureau, on existing investigations. The Director, Office of *Special Operations*, will attempt to resolve any disagreement over investigative responsibility between CTSOB and Detective Bureau. The final reviewing authority will remain with the Chief of Police.

- *Disseminating, via intradepartmental communication*, information necessary for field operations;
- Investigating and/or assisting the Los Angeles Fire Department Arson Unit for arson-related crimes at houses of worship (e.g., a suspicious fire at a church, synagogue, mosque or temple);
- Assuming responsibility for investigations or providing assistance *with* investigations which exceed the resources of an Area/division;
- Maintaining liaison with other members of the Department, other law enforcement and governmental agencies, and business and residential communities in the region for matters related to terrorism;
- *Coordinating*, procuring, retaining and maintaining a file of undercover driver licenses of MCD personnel;
- *Investigating electronic 911 abuse incidents; and*
- The Commanding Officer, MCD, is designated as the Department's Terrorism Liaison Officer Program (TLOP) Coordinator. The Department TLOP Coordinator will exercise Citywide oversight of Area/specialized divisions Terrorism Liaison Officers (TLOs) and ensure that effective communication is maintained between the Area TLOs and MCD.

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**MAJOR CRIMES DIVISION, ANTI – TERRORISM INTELLIGENCE SECTION.**

Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Section is responsible for:

- *Investigating* individuals and groups who may plan, threaten, finance, aid/abet, attempt or perform unlawful acts, the results of which are intended to further their societal objectives, to influence societal action, or to harass on the basis of race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation;
- *Assisting Criminal Investigative Section (CIS), Major Crimes Division (MCD), personnel in investigating individuals and groups who may be involved in electronic 911 abuse incidents to further their personal or political action, harass on the basis of race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation; and,*
- Coordinating Protective Intelligence Details with the United States Secret Service.

**SURVEILLANCE SUPPORT SECTION.** The Surveillance Support Section is responsible for providing both physical and technical surveillance capabilities for Department-wide operations.

Physical Surveillance Section is responsible for:

- Providing support to investigations through physical surveillance; and,
- Gathering intelligence and criminal information through physical surveillance activity.

Technical Support Unit (TSU) is responsible for:

- Providing criminal and intelligence investigative support when the investigations involves, or can be aided by the use of, technical surveillance;
- *Deploying* electronic equipment that can locate, track and observe criminal and intelligence activities to aid in the successful resolution to the investigation; *and,*
- *Assisting CIS, MCD, in expediting the service of a search warrant to telephone companies and internet providers.*

**MAJOR CRIMES DIVISION – CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION SECTION.** Criminal Investigation Section is responsible for:

- Investigating individuals or groups that are involved in criminal activity that have a domestic or international terrorist nexus;
- *Investigating and arresting individuals involved in electronic 911 abuse incidents;*
- *Investigating* incidents deemed an eminent threat to public safety; and,
- Upon approval from the Commanding Officer of CTSOB, *CIS* may be tasked with assisting Area detectives on cases that require additional resources and/or specific expertise.